

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

operating a storage system that includes a communication port, the port having a mode of operation, wherein the storage system is operable to provide a host with access to a set of mass storage devices by using the port, and to provide a plurality of hosts with file-level access and block-level access to stored data; and

configuring the storage system from a first network configuration to a second network configuration or vice versa by dynamically switching the mode of operation of the port between a target mode and an initiator mode in response to user input from a user of the storage system, wherein in the first network configuration, the port is configured in the target mode and the storage system is connected through the port via a switching fabric to a set of clients to provide the set of clients with block-level access to a set of mass storage devices, and wherein in the second network configuration, the port is configured in the initiator mode.

2. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the port is a Fibre Channel port.

3. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the port is an iSCSI port.

4. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein operating the storage system comprises storing a variable within the storage system; and

dynamically switching the mode of operation of the port comprises:

changing a state of the variable based on user input; and

reconfiguring the port to operate in either the target mode or the initiator mode based on the state of the variable.

5. (Original) A method as recited in claim 4, wherein the state of the variable is based on whether a right to use a particular protocol is associated with the storage system.

6. (Original) A method as recited in claim 5, wherein the protocol is a Fibre Channel Protocol (FCP).

7. (Original) A method as recited in claim 1, wherein dynamically switching the mode of operation of the port comprises:

selecting one of a target driver and an initiator driver for the port based on a state of the variable.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Canceled)

10. (Canceled)

11. (Original) A method as recited in claim 10, wherein in the second network configuration, the storage system is connected through the port to a SAN-based backup mass storage medium.

12. (Original) A method as recited in claim 10, wherein in the second network configuration the port is one of a plurality of ports used to connect the storage system to a set of mass storage devices.

13-46. (Canceled)

47. (New) A storage system, comprising:

a communication port, the port having a mode of operation, and being operable to provide a host with access to a set of mass storage devices by using the port, and to provide a plurality of hosts with file-level access and block-level access to stored data; and

a controller to dynamically switch the mode of operation of the port between a target mode and an initiator mode in response to user input from a user of the storage system such that the storage system is configured from a first network configuration to a second network configuration or vice versa, wherein in the first network configuration, the port is configured in the target mode and the storage system is connected through the port via a switching fabric to a set of clients to provide the set of clients with block-level access to a set of mass storage devices, and wherein in the second network configuration, the port is configured in the initiator mode.